

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A heat-embossed, fastening non-woven fabric comprising, as at least one component, core-sheath or side-by-side heat-fusing composite staple fibers of 30 to 300 mm in length having a low-melting polymer component on a fiber surface, a number of crimp of 10 to 20 crimps/inch and a percentage crimp of 5 to 20%, wherein a front surface of the non-woven fabric comprises a non-embossed portion and an embossed portion, the non-embossed portion being a ~~large~~ number of regularly or irregularly dispersed convex island regions upwardly projecting from the front surface of the non-woven fabric, a base portion of each convex island region having an area corresponding to an area-based equivalent circle having a mean diameter of 2 to 8 mm, the embossed portion being a sea region surrounding each island region, and at least one end of the composite staple fibers in the non-embossed portion that constitute the convex island regions being press- and heat-anchored at the embossed portion that constitute the sea region.

Claim 2 (Original): The non-woven fabric according to claim 1, having a basis weight of 20 to 100 g/m² and a bulk density of 0.01 to 0.10 g/cm³.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The non-woven fabric according to claim 1, wherein 80% of the heat-fusing staple fibers constituting the non-woven fabric are core-sheath or side-by-side composite staple fibers ~~having the number of crimp of 10 to 20 crimps/inch and a percentage crimp of 5 to 20%.~~

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The non-woven fabric according to claim 1, wherein 100% of the heat-fusing staple fibers constituting the non-woven fabric are core-sheath or

side-by-side composite staple fibers ~~having the number of crimp of 10 to 20 crimps/inch and a percentage crimp of 5 to 20%.~~

Claim 5 (Original): The non-woven fabric according to claim 1, wherein a height of each convex island region from a surface of the sea region surrounding the convex island regions to a top of the convex island regions is 0.3 to 3 mm.

Claim 6 (Cancelled):

Claim 7 (Original): The non-woven fabric according to claim 1, wherein a distance between adjacent island regions is 0.5 to 5.0 mm.

Claim 8 (Original): The non-woven fabric according to claim 1, wherein the number of the island regions is 80 to 800 per 100 cm² of a surface of the non-woven fabric.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A process of producing a fastening non-woven fabric, comprising ~~heat-embossing forming~~ forming a web ~~composed of~~ comprising a sliver of core-sheath or side-by-side heat-fusing composite staple fibers of 30 to 300 mm in length, and heat-embossing the web thereby to cause a non-embossed portion to form a large number of regularly or irregularly dispersed convex island regions upwardly projected from a front surface of the web and allow an embossed portion to ~~from form~~ form a sea region surrounding each of the island regions, wherein the dimensions of the non-embossed portion and the embossed portion are adjusted so as to make a maximum diameter of the non-embossed region dispersed as the island regions shorter than a sliver length, and wherein at least one

end of the composite staple fibers constituting the non-embossed island regions is heat-anchored at the embossed sea region.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): A loop fastener member for use in a surface fastener, which is made of the non-woven fabric according to claim 1.

Claim 11 (New): The non-woven fabric according to claim 4, comprising core-sheath heat-fusing composite staple fibers.

Claim 12 (New): The non-woven fabric according to claim 11, wherein the melting point difference between a core polymer and a sheath polymer is 30°C or more.

Claim 13 (New): The non-woven fabric according to claim 11, comprising a polyethylene terephthalate or polypropylene core and a polyethylene sheath.

Claim 14 (New): The non-woven fabric according to claim 12, comprising a polyethylene terephthalate or polypropylene core and a polyethylene sheath.

Claim 15 (New): The process according to claim 9, wherein said web comprises a sliver of core-sheath heat-fusing composite staple fibers.

Claim 16 (New): The process according to claim 15, wherein the melting point difference between the core polymer and the sheath polymer is 30°C or more.

Claim 17 (New): The process according to claim 15, wherein said core-sheath heat-fusing composite staple fibers comprise a polyethylene terephthalate or polypropylene core and a polyethylene sheath.

Claim 18 (New): The process according to claim 16, wherein said core-sheath heat-fusing composite staple fibers comprise a polyethylene terephthalate or polypropylene core and a polyethylene sheath.

Claim 19 (New): The process according to claim 9, wherein said web comprises a sliver of side-by-side heat-fusing composite staple fibers.